

Research Article

Cultural Identity at the Crossroads of Virtual Worlds and Global Transformations: A Critical Inquiry

Ayoub Regragui* 

English Department, Mohammed V University, Rabat, Morocco

Abstract

This paper examines the transformation of cultural identity in the context of globalization, digital communication, and virtual societies. The accelerated development of information and communication technologies has reshaped human interaction and in so doing created new forms of social belonging that transcend not only the geographical boundaries but also the linguistic, and cultural ones. Within this line of thought, the study attempts to examine the emergence of virtual identity and its influence on local and traditional cultural identity (ies). In this regard, the paper adopts sociological, philosophical, and cultural theories proposed by scholars such as John Locke, George Herbert Mead, Stuart Hall, Pierre Bourdieu, Zygmunt Bauman, and Manuel Castells. More specifically, it discusses the complex dialectical relationship between identity, language, and culture and points out their interconnected role in the construction of individual and collective identity (ies). Furthermore, the study investigates the way virtual environments and network societies contribute to the construction, reconstruction and redefinition of citizenship, cultural belonging, and social interaction. In addition, special attention is given to the challenges dictated by globalization, intellectual affiliation, and the dominance of digital cultural norms, which could weaken local identities and cultural specificities. The paper, in this respect, adopts a critical theoretical approach grounded in cultural studies and sociology in order to analyze the complex tensions between authenticity, modernity, and virtual existence. The findings suggest that cultural identity is neither fixed nor static. On the contrary, it remains dynamic and subject to continuous reconstruction through social, historical, and technological transformations. Finally, the paper argues that while virtual spaces provide opportunities for intercultural openness and global interaction, they also raise urgent questions regarding cultural preservation, linguistic identity, and the future of authentic belonging in the digital age.

Keywords

Cultural Identity, Virtual Identity, Globalization, Digital Culture, Network Society, Virtual Communities

1. Cultural Identity and the Relationship Between Identity and Culture

The world is currently witnessing a massive and an unavoidable technological revolution in various fields, which has made the world appear like a small virtual global village. This revolution

has contributed to facilitating access to technology for all age groups in society. As a result of this significant technological advancement, social media platforms have witnessed a remarkable

*Correspondence: Ayoub Regragui (regraguiayoub@gmail.com)

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growth, with increasing rapid engagement due to the means of attraction and stimulation they offer to users.

The emergence of these platforms has led to the appearance of what is referred to as virtual communities, which rely on the use of technology and its tools. From this concept, other concepts have emerged such as digital citizenship and virtual digital identity. As a result, our cultural identity is no longer confined to the real world, but has also become influenced by the modern technological reality, which has led to a transformation in cultural identity from traditional concepts to virtual concepts. Arab societies are indeed living between two overlapping identities: the authentic real identity embodied in the heritage of the language, religion, culture, and civilization, and the virtual identity that has been formed through cyberspace and its multiple media.

Virtual identity refers to an identity linked to the individual's activities and interactions online, within the framework of virtual spaces and elements of virtual cultural communication, transcending the boundaries of place, time, language, religion, and history. We are speaking here about the individual's activities and interactions with others who also share a virtual identity, where the individual goes beyond the limits of national identity, local culture, language, religion, and history to become part of the virtual identity and its dimensions. Virtual identity is formed through virtual identity. The light of the virtual world that the individual constructs for himself.

Naturally, perspectives on issues of cultural identity must fundamentally shift from a past-oriented viewpoint, and individuals must acquire the skills of accepting others, being open to different cultures, and overcoming geographical barriers. By overcoming the psychological barriers created by each group's particular view of the world, anthropologists define the human being as a cultural being, indicating that cultural identity plays a central role in shaping human thoughts, visions, and aspirations, and affirming that it influences people's thoughts, visions, and ideas, as well as their aspirations and interactions within their social and cultural system and other systems [1].

The issue of identity, at first glance, refers to a broader subject related to social identity, which is considered one of its main components. It is not possible to address the concept of identity without defining its social dimensions. Social identity expresses the "result of the reciprocal interactions between the individual and his social environment, whether near or distant." The individual's social identity is characterized by a set of affiliations within the social system, such as belonging to a certain class, an age group, or a social or conceptual category, which helps the individual to recognize himself within the social context and allows society to recognize him [2].

However, social identity is not limited to individuals only, but each group possesses its own identity that determines its social definition, which contributes to determining its position within the broader social whole. Social identity is considered a process of inclusion and exclusion at the same time; it defines the identity of the group, which comprises members who

share certain similarities. From this perspective, cultural identity emerges as a mechanism for defining categories that distinguish between "we" and "they," a distinction that is grounded in cultural differences.

Identity is broader than language, as it manifests in forms beyond language; language represents a component of identity, but identity is not confined to it. Nevertheless, they may be understood as two sides of the same coin. Numerous studies have demonstrated the existence of a significant relationship between language and both individual and collective identity, where this relationship depends on mastery of the mother tongue and personal and academic learning. In any society, language is not limited to words and expressions, but constitutes a medium that carries emotional components, beliefs, and the specificities of that society, which explains the reason behind each people's attachment to and pride in their language.

Identity is a historical and social construct that emerges through the interactions of individuals and societies. It reflects certain features and behaviors, and encompasses oral and written traditions, in addition to documents that express shared characteristics and traits. Identity also reflects the visions, concepts, and intellectual orientations that distinguish each society. In its abstract sense, identity consists of a set of signs and characteristics that differentiate the self from the other. When these signs and characteristics are absent, the self disappears and merges into the other, whereas identity is manifested through their presence.

Identity is the way individuals or groups define themselves, in which language, culture, and religion play significant roles in its formation. By its nature, identity tends toward plurality and integration when it is properly managed, while it may lead to conflict and division if it is ignored or misunderstood. Therefore, identity can function as a factor of unity and development, or it may become a cause of fragmentation and the disintegration of the social fabric, which is often grounded in a shared language.

Culture and identity are considered two inseparable elements that cannot be dissociated, as each nation possesses its own culture that reflects its identity. Culture, in its broad sense, encompasses a set of values, principles, and foundations that distinguish a nation or a group from others. The more distinctive the culture is, the more this specificity is reflected in its individuals. Culture does not, in any way, imply abandoning or denying heritage in favor of modern ideas, nor does it entail immersion in the past and withdrawal from the present and what it carries of new ideas and cultures on the pretext that they are foreign. The culture of peoples reflects the traits and characteristics that distinguish each people from another, based on a set of historical, religious, literary, educational, economic, and cognitive roots, which grant each people a distinctive identity within the global cultural context.

Culture is a driving force for the civilizational development of the nation in its various dimensions, philosophical, literary, political, and social, and it also represents a source of creativity across diverse fields of human activity. Indeed, for culture

to be effective, it must strive to raise human awareness, develop the human spirit, refine talents, and mobilize energies toward construction and development, thereby contributing to advancement, progress, and prosperity. Moreover, culture embrace all the distinctive features of a nation, whether material, spiritual, intellectual, artistic, or emotional. It also includes, in addition, knowledge, values, and established moral commitments, modes of thinking, aesthetic, artistic, cognitive, and technical creativity, as well as patterns of behavior, expression, and ways of life. Furthermore, it incorporates human aspirations toward ideals, efforts to reassess achievements, the continuous search for new meanings in life, values, and the future, and the creation of what enables individuals to transcend themselves. In this respect, identity is influenced by social and natural conditions and faces challenges related to poverty and wealth, love and hatred, strength and weakness, and truth and falsehood. Likewise, identity is formed through the interaction of individuals within society, whether under democracy or dictatorship, as this depends on justice and injustice [3].

Identity includes the concept of independence and particularity, as it emphasizes the importance of the other in shaping the self. Indeed, identity is reinforced through the defense of the values and principles that the individual takes pride in, which helps him face challenges. Furthermore, cultural identity interacts with social relations, where culture plays a fundamental role in linking individuals. Consequently, these relations influence attitudes and values, which, in turn, strengthen social bonds [4].

Cultural identity consists of a set of psychological and cognitive factors, and it is not fixed but rather evolves over time. In fact, it is shaped by the social and historical environment and manifests through the interactions of individuals and societies. Ultimately, identity reflects the differentiation of individuals and their uniqueness, which makes it a fundamental element in understanding the self and existence. In addition, members of a group exhibit certain shared features, as the group seeks to assert its identity despite the diverse orientations of its members. At the same time, these differences contribute to the deepening of their varied desires and interests. Moreover, individuals express their internal tensions through multiple forms, which, in turn, reflect a cultural identity that may be either similar or different.

Groups are characterized by historical traits and shared experiences, which strengthens their unity. The more similarities there are among individuals, the greater the shared identity, whether in attitudes or values. Similarity may be exposed to challenges, but cultural symbols express identity and appear through arts, poetry, and music.

Cultural identity defines the elements that form its essence, and moves away from questions related to the past, as it interacts with the aspirations and hopes of individuals. Cultural identity is a living entity that develops continuously, and reflects the heritage to which individuals belong. Cultural identity consists of multiple elements, such as language, customs, and traditions, and it reflects the feelings of individuals and

their perceptions. We must understand that cultural identity is not fixed, but interacts with other societies, which enhances our understanding of the world around us [5].

Cultural identity is influenced by social and historical changes, and often remains linked to language as a fundamental element. Also, culture expresses the existence of individuals in society, where language plays a central role in shaping identity and communication among individuals. In the end, cultural identity is defined through symbols and traditions, and it reflects the experiences of individuals and their history, which makes it an essential element in understanding the self and society.

As for the relationship of language with identity, it goes beyond language in its connection to identity beyond its simple linguistic and technical meaning, to become a symbol that expresses the society to which it belongs, a tool for interaction, and a way of thinking and expression for its individuals. It also represents a social issue that is closely linked to the identity of the state and the personality of its citizens, and works as an influential factor in strengthening belonging, cohesion, and loyalty among them [6].

The dialectic of the relationship between identity and culture

This relationship reflects the interaction of the self with cultural production, as no cultural production can occur without the existence of a thinking self. There is no need to enter into a debate about the precedence of the self or the object, as everything that occurs in the mind is the result of what the senses receive and record on the page of the mind, as indicated by John Locke and the empiricist trend in general.

The thinking self plays a central role in producing culture, determining its type, its objectives, and its identity in every society and in every era. Accordingly, it is difficult to find a comprehensive definition of the concept of cultural identity, as this identity differs from one society to another and from one era to another, and is also influenced by the intellectual and ideological orientations of the producers of culture [7].

The relationship between identity and culture is related to the connection of the self with cultural production, as no cultural production can occur without the existence of a thinking self. Without entering into the debate about the precedence of the self over the object, as proposed by the ideal rationalist trend, or the opposite where the object is considered to precede the self, everything that exists in the mind is the result of what the senses capture and record on the "page" of the human mind, as indicated by Locke and the empiricist trend in general.

Cultural identity represents a set of traits and characteristics that distinguish the Arab personality, which makes it unique compared to other cultural identities. These characteristics include language, religion, history, heritage, customs, traditions, and norms, in addition to various cultural components. Some define the cultural and civilizational identity of any nation as a set of essential and fixed characteristics that distinguish its civilization from others, which gives the national or ethnic personality a special character that distinguishes it from other

national and ethnic personalities [8].

There is a close relationship between our conceptions of culture and cultural identity. People who see culture as a second nature that we accept as a heritage from which there is no escape consider identity as a given that determines the individual definitively and in a way that is almost unchangeable. From this perspective, cultural identity is considered a set of the individual's original affiliations, where origin and roots, according to the traditional view, are the basis of every cultural identity; that is, what defines the individual in a certain and authentic way. This quasi-hereditary conception of identity, which plays a role in reinforcing ideologies of rootedness, leads to the naturalization of cultural belonging. In other words, identity precedes the individual, who has no choice but to integrate into it; otherwise, he will face the fate of marginalization. Identity, conceived in this way, appears as a fixed essence that does not allow development, and neither the individual nor the group has any control over it [9].

The problem of origin, when applied to cultural identity, can lead to defining individuals and groups, where identity in some extreme theses is considered practically inscribed in genetic inheritance. There are also other theories in cultural identity that are considered primordial, where they see that cultural ethnic identity is the basis, and that belonging to an ethnic group is the first and most important among all affiliations.

There is a close relationship between language and culture, as it is not possible to perceive any language, whatever it may be, without producing a certain culture, and likewise, it is not possible to perceive a culture that does not rely on a language that expresses it and interacts with it. They are two overlapping circles that cannot be separated from one another. This is why, we do not aim to provide or bring into the surface any definitions of culture or its orientations, but we aim to emphasize an important point: if language expresses thought that interacts with things and takes specific positions toward them, then culture also represents those complex and intangible elements that determine the ways of dealing with these things and influence reactions toward them. Therefore, they can be considered two sides of the same coin, where culture may be broader in scope, but language remains an essential element in shaping it and directing its course. At the same time, culture plays a vital role in influencing language as an expression of thought. It is important to note that language and culture are not individual products, but rather part of the social dynamics in which they live. Hence comes the need to distinguish between them, and between science and "culture is a theory in behavior more than it is a theory in knowledge, which highlights the necessary difference between culture and science" [10].

The thinking self plays a vital role in producing culture and determining its type, its objectives, and its identity in every society and in every era. From this, it is difficult to find a comprehensive and precise definition of the concept of cultural identity, as this identity differs according to the intellectual and ideological orientations of individuals who use culture

[11].

From here, culture and identity are among the ways that are used to define the identity of individuals in society, and this is achieved by paying attention to the culture of that society. The relationship between culture and identity is a close one and can be highlighted; however, these two concepts differ from each other, and each has its own function. Although the concepts of identity and culture are interconnected, they cannot be used interchangeably, as culture can be formed without awareness of identity, while identity strategies can manipulate, and even change, a culture that has nothing in common with its past. Culture is more related to unconscious processes than others, whereas identity, on the contrary, is linked to the criterion of belonging, which is necessarily self-conscious because it depends on symbolic contradictions [12].

2. Cultural Identity and Contemporary Challenges

Many attempts are repeatedly manifest within contexts of intellectual and cultural conflict, which lead to the distortion of the other and cause harm to the cultural and moral constants upon which it relies in managing its affairs. Intellectual alienation refers to the distortion of thought that represents the intellectual identity of a group or a society. As for the causes of intellectual alienation, they aim to weaken thought and render it incapable of confronting other forms of thought, thereby facilitating the erasure of its role and specificity and its replacement with an alien form of thought [13].

Some thinkers believe that alienation occurs when a rational being, who possesses a sphere of ordinary thinking, falls captive to an idea or a more influential power, such that this power becomes the axis around which all other designations revolve. Alienation comes in multiple forms, including cultural, economic, and social, where intellectual alienation can be the channel through which all other types of alienation pass. Mental alienation necessarily leads to intellectual and cultural alienation, which imposes its approach on the behaviors and dispositions of the alienated self at all levels.

There is no doubt that "independent" and "free" thinking represents great importance for the human being, as the loss of self intellectual identity simply means the loss of the human himself. One of the conditions for the existence of the rational being is thinking, while alienation prevents objective and rational thinking, and here alienation appears in its ugliest forms, affecting individuals to the extent that they lose the ability to retain their own ideas.

The long human journey across ages has witnessed multiple forms of intellectual alienation, which have greatly affected the trajectories of societies. When a society lacks self-thinking, its intellectual personality is reduced to zero, which makes it clearly alienated. The feeling of inferiority toward a stronger thought is among the most dangerous causes that drive the collective mind to surrender, as this feeling leads to

complete submission to the other, which weakens the specific intellectual identity and places it in a state of atrophy and inability to confront alien thought. If this feeling turns into a collective pattern, the collective mind becomes completely paralyzed, which leads to the disappearance of the capacity for confrontation [14].

Language is considered the foundation upon which the imagination of the nation is built, and from here comes the importance of the standard language and the controls of interpretation in discourse. Therefore, the linguistic system is considered the house of the human being, as it organizes his affairs, stores his symbols and wealth, shelters him, and preserves his secrets. Through it, the human being perceives the world around him. There is no doubt that there is a close relationship between identity and language, despite the debate about how they influence each other. The problem does not lie in the connection of identity with language itself, but in dealing with this connection as if it were a one-way path. Some scholars have devoted their attention to studying how national languages shape national identities, without paying attention to how national identities are formed [15].

Therefore, there is no neutral language, as every language carries values and a spirit, and it is our means of understanding the world, representing it in our minds, and communicating with others. With the diversity of languages, our representations of existence multiply, and language organizes the lives of individuals and groups and shapes their habits. We see, hear, and express in the ways we are accustomed to, because the habits of linguistic groups have prepared for us certain options in interpretation, and these habits differ from one group to another. No nation speaks except in the way it thinks, and thinks in the way it speaks, which consolidates its experiences in its language, including real and false experiences that are transmitted to subsequent generations.

Language contributes to the continuity of the collective imagination, as institutions are formulated before being translated into behaviors, and daily life is transmitted either orally or in writing, or is addressed as a subject of reflection. In the socialization of the child, cultural phenomena are transmitted through the linguistic forms adopted by the group. Thus, language adapts attitudes and prepares individuals and groups in advance for action and reaction, and for thinking in a certain way. Language transfers individuals from a human group to a cultural group, which means that the linguistic bond is stronger than the political bond. If a human group is politically connected, it may form a national group, but this does not guarantee cultural homogeneity among its members simply by joining under one political bond. History, whether ancient or modern, is full of evidence of this, as political entities that were thought to be cohesive have fragmented, as happened in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union. In contrast, the unification of Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall shows that shared culture, language, and common intellectual heritage are stronger than politics, economy, and ideology [16].

3. Cultural Identity and Its Challenges

The cognitive separation from the cultural heritage that has been inherited from our ancestors, under the pretext of contemporaneity and modernity, is ineffective and does not represent the correct path to knowledge generated by the human mind. It also does not help in producing a culture that evolves over time and distinguishes this society from other societies. On the other hand, relying only on heritage and the knowledge left by our ancestors cannot allow this society to interact with the present in a way that is consistent with the culture, creativity, and ideas produced by the era. Therefore, the renewal of cultural heritage is one of the priority challenges facing our Arab society. Through reading our heritage rationally, we feel connected to the past, which allows us to shape our own modernity and enables us to participate effectively in the process of global modernization, rather than merely being recipients. Modernity is not an end in itself, but represents a cultural message and a desire for renewal, whether at the level of mentality or at the spiritual and emotional level [17].

The dialectic of the self and the other, the search for cultural identity, and the conflict between authenticity and modernity were raised when the Arabs realized the importance of searching for their cultural identity to distinguish themselves from others. As if the cultural identity of our society or our distinction as Arabs compared to other nations means that we must be prisoners of the past, and that past-oriented thinking controls us. Perhaps the legacy of oppression left by the colonizer is what made these dualities attract Arab thinkers, which led to a real conflict between two currents: the first sees the other as an enemy that must be approached with caution, and relies on our heritage and our strong past, while the second looks at the Western other with admiration, preferring its culture and ways of life over the culture of local peoples. Here, the dialectic of the self and the other is raised, and the conflict between Arab culture and Western culture [18].

This dialectic raises fundamental questions. There are those who are governed by past-oriented awareness and call for the revival of religious and ethnic fundamentalisms that adopt regressive conceptions of identity, while there is another vision that sees that the advancement of society requires orientation toward the culture of modernity and the denial of heritage and what it represents of the deep history of this nation. On the other hand, the current that calls for modernity and denies heritage sees that identity is nothing but a set of illusory projections that the individual attributes to himself, which gives priority to the individual's belonging to the global general over the local particular. This hypothesis stems from the ideas of globalization and the philosophy of postmodernity. Therefore, the discourse of identity is the product of what is called cultural rights, which are based on the references of modernity, democratic culture, and contemporary international charters.

The world today is witnessing rapid changes in multiple fields, whether material, cognitive, or artistic. One of the most prominent challenges facing contemporary Arab thought in all

its fields is how to critique Western systems and study Arab heritage, with the aim of determining the features of the future and rebuilding Arab historical identity. This requires adopting scientific rationality and creativity, as controlling destiny and shaping the future have become urgent necessities in light of the major challenges facing the Arab world from the industrial world that has entered the post-technological era. This development was not the result of chance, but came as a result of continuous efforts to develop the mind and enhance its capabilities, leading to a dialectical and analytical methodology of reality. The struggle was not limited to material dimensions, but also included human dimensions through the development of the human sciences, which sought to discover the laws of social movement and the secrets of energy.

4. Cultural Identity in the Virtual World

The standards of the virtual existence of the individual as an active being in the networked society differ from those of material reality, as the sociality of the individual in real life is manifested through his actual presence as a physically present element, and as an active and interactive being who possesses an independent and distinct existence from others. The individual builds his sociality based on an integrated system of values and society that ensures his social stability within a civilizational and social system that guides his behavior and determines the controls and standards that preserve his humanity and his purpose in existence. With the emergence of the virtual society, the existence of the actor in this new space has taken new forms that are consistent with the characteristics of the digital environment, which is characterized by its openness to unlimited cultural meanings, in addition to its ability to integrate all traditional means of communication (such as television, radio, newspapers, the telephone, messages, books, and files) into one platform (such as computers and internet-connected tablets). Thus, word, image, and sound come together at the same time, and the function of these means changes from mere tools of communication and transmission of information to being a display, a storage, and even a transmitter of spiritual, human, and civilizational values, which makes them an essential part of the lifestyle of contemporary human beings and contributes to shaping their human culture.

The social phenomenon, with all aspects of its representations, cultural, technical, behavioral, economic, political, and legal, has moved from being represented only naturally in traditional human society, to being represented also in an artificial, symbolic, digital, and mechanical form, while retaining aspects of its original representation. However, it has become in its electronic manufactured form from the atom to the electron, as social life in this new context is a digital life on the internet in the manufactured space, which imposes on sociology to expand to include the study of the electronic human society.

The network society is considered one of the leading concepts established by the contemporary sociologist Castells

(Castells, 1996), who developed the network theory that explains the laws governing the functioning of the global information society and its main features. He discussed the main features of the network society from political, economic, and communicational angles, and also addressed the types of identities circulating in this society, which reflect their being in the face of globalization. His sociological approach is considered one of the most important approaches that explain the information society based on technology, which is characterized by several features.

There is no doubt that the challenges of virtual circulation in the network society, which is characterized by a global cultural context, require defining the concept of the virtual citizen, in addition to raising real questions about the meanings of belonging. The existence of the human being in the virtual space forces him to move between multiple cultures and to visit different homelands, transcending geographical and temporal boundaries. Thus, the individual lives an important part of his daily life in a state of continuous movement between two worlds: one virtual that extends to allow him to follow global developments, which enhances his virtual existence and grants him a global citizenship, and the other real that reconnects him to his local reality and his homeland. This is thanks to the alternatives that the virtual society provides to its users, which contribute to shaping his virtual identity.

The internet has managed to integrate the world into one entity through interactions on the network, digital culture, virtual communities, forums, social learning, and other shared elements that have made the individual belong to a global sphere and become an active member of global society with peers from different parts of the world, where they are brought together by many social, cultural, political, economic, and emotional issues. This contributes to integrating the individual into his global and universal sphere.

5. The Virtual World and Cultural Identity

The priorities of establishing moral values in shaping digital identity require the user to benefit from the margin of freedom available to him in virtual society, while bearing ethical responsibility toward digital interactions in the public space, so that he can pursue shared interests and share them with others, with a focus on expressing his culture and civilizational identity, and working to serve the public sphere in a purposeful way, not only as an observer but also as a practitioner. The transformations witnessed by global societies have shown that the rise of social movements reflects the effectiveness of the virtual public space, but at the same time raises questions about the challenges facing national identities, especially with the increasing debate about identity, universality, and the self, which may draw the virtual citizen into false global spheres and lead to the loss of his connection to real citizenship.

The "internet generation" appears as a generation with a

dual identity; on the one hand, it is fragile and immature, and constantly needs guidance in the world of modern technology to build a “balanced” relationship with it, and on the other hand, it is a curious, independent, and intelligent generation, capable of adapting and inclined to enhance itself, in addition to having a comprehensive vision in directing itself.

This result is considered inevitable, especially if we know that the boundaries of digital identity in the virtual world are not clear, as they are not limited by geographical or value-based boundaries. It is an open and unlimited space for global citizens of different races and cultural backgrounds. Thus, the identity of each individual extends from his national identity to global dimensions. The challenges brought by globalized technology as a result of the effects of information and communication technology, and the value-based and civilizational dimension of the content carried by the media message, which has often been neglected by Western social studies.

The content digitally carries values, especially since influence in the context of the network society is characterized by an emotional nature, particularly in a digital environment that enhances the achievement of the desired effect. The matter is not limited to that, but the logic of action and reaction within social networks is constantly changing, as it is governed by the requirements of virtual communication, whether synchronous or asynchronous, which may require immediate or intermittent responses, which affects the logic of human communication.

The scope of social relations between users and their boundaries has changed, and the personal, professional, and social space has become highly overlapping, which calls for discussing the manifestations of virtual identity in open contexts that may lead to the fading of many personal barriers that may threaten the privacy of human relationships, especially if the parties to communication do not adhere to controlling the process of programming their personal accounts according to specific technical standards.

Abbreviations

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
SNSs	Social Networking Sites

Author Contributions

Ayoub Regragui: Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Resources, Validation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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